



Education and Early Childhood Development Office of the Minister

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December 1, 2023

Dear Administrators and SAC Chairs:

Thank you for volunteering your time to serve your school community as part of your School Advisory Council (SAC). SACs are an integral part of Nova Scotia's public schools. As part of an SAC, you play a valuable role in promoting student achievement and safe and inclusive schools.

In September 2021, I was mandated, as Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD), to “consult with a variety of groups, including parents from across the province, teachers, administrators, program assistants, representatives from the African Nova Scotian, First Nations, and disability communities to determine a governance model for P-12 education that allows for increased local voice in Education policy and decision-making.”

Since that time, we have hosted public engagements where we have asked students, families, school staff, SACs, community members, and the public how to increase local voice in our schools and in the education system. You can learn more about how we engaged, who we engaged with, and what we heard, here: [Strengthening Local Voices | Education and Early Childhood Development \(ednet.ns.ca\)](http://ednet.ns.ca). You can also view the full suite of actions being undertaken as a result of these engagements on this website.

Thank you so much for your participation in the engagement process. Your feedback has greatly shaped how we are moving forward to ensure families and others have an enhanced voice in the education system, SACs have greater support and funding to provide meaningful input into local and regional school decisions, and families can better connect and get answers from schools and regional centres for education (RCEs)/ and the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP).

This letter focuses on the actions that will enhance the role of SACs in supporting schools and RCEs/CSAP through:

- A new **Innovation Fund** that provides grants up to \$10,000 to a school SAC to support student well-being and achievement.
 - EECD is working to establish the parameters of this grant and create application forms and guidelines.
 - SACs will be able to apply for individual grants.
 - We will provide more details on how your SAC can get involved, including a launch date.
- An **annual conference** for all SAC Chairs to provide policy input and discuss common school challenges and opportunities.
 - EECD is working to determine the date of the inaugural conference for Fall 2024.
 - Please continue to visit: <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/SAC> for information about SACs and check your GNSPES email often to ensure you receive any invitations to provide policy input.

- Providing **more input** into how school funds are distributed in schools, including the Healthy Schools Grant.
 - The Healthy Schools Grant is intended to enhance students' health and well-being, supporting academic achievement and student success.
 - SACs should be engaged to determine how best to use grant funds to support student health and well-being.

- Additional parent, guardian, and community representation on SACs.
 - SACs are encouraged to add more parent and community members to respond to interest and to reflect the diversity of the community served by the school. Ideally no more than half of SAC membership should be parents.
 - This may include increasing the overall size of your SAC (up to 18 members).
 - EECD will work to amend the [Ministerial Education Act Regulations - Education Act \(Nova Scotia\) to reflect this change in SAC](#) composition.

I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage you to fill out the annual survey for SACs for 2023-24. This survey is an important tool to help the EECD, RCEs, and the CSAP ensure that SACs have the information and resources required to support student achievement and well-being.

Please complete only one survey per SAC. The survey can be accessed via the following links: <https://forms.gle/DZ5SGbETk4qvV9Ux7> (in French) <https://forms.gle/W5d3Xzb3xh58u4wY6> (in English).

Thank you again for your service and for taking the time to complete this survey. I look forward to continuing to work together as the changes outlined in this letter are implemented in the education system. We know that students do better when families are involved. Together, we can increase local voice in education policy and decision-making and support achievement and well-being of our students.

Sincerely,



Becky Druhan
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development